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CALGARY • WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2008 metronews.ca

## Celebrity pg 26



### Oprah's 'fallen off' the weight wagon

## Church daycare evacuated after smoke smell

**INCIDENT** Thirty-three children and 10 adults evacuated a daycare at the Bridgeland SDA church yesterday around 4 p.m. after the smell of smoke was detected inside the structure.

Fire crews attended the scene at 48 12 St. NE and confirmed the smell, believing the building's furnace to be responsible.

The children were sheltered at the Christine Meikle School until parents were able to pick them up.

Maintenance crews for the building have been asked to have the furnace inspected, and the daycare has been instructed not to have children attend until the problem is fixed.

No injuries were reported.

METRO CALGARY

## Travel pg 22

## Global guide for New Year

## Automotive pg 19



## Mazda3 spirit alive and well

## Entertainment pg 24

## Smith shy with love scenes



Training **Ice-cold rescue**

Calgary Fire Department divers took a dip in the bone-chilling waters of the Glenmore Reservoir yesterday, training in preparation for the upcoming ice season. The divers practised one- and two-person rescue scenarios. Between October 2007 and May 2008, the Calgary Fire Department responded to 46 water- and ice-related incidents.

# West LRT in pictures

NEIL MACKINNON  
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**Clifford Samuels typified many Calgarians cavorting around a southwest school gym yesterday.**

Visibly excited to see actual plans of the West LRT and its six stations for the first time on a series of large placards along three walls, Samuels, who lives just across the street from what will become 45th St. station, was equally disappointed it won't be underground.

"It looks really cool, really modern, it looks like a nice station," said Samuels, still not satisfied enough has been done to ensure the nearby fire hall, police station and EMS will run smoothly.

"It would have been preferable to have it underground, because you can do a lot more with the area that way. It'll be interesting to see what they do about pedestrian crossings."

Hundreds of people ran their fingers over lines, grilling city officials on the project's plans, which drew

**"It looks really cool, really modern ..."**

Clifford Samuels

substantial public criticism over the past year, ranging from station placement and design to traffic-flow impediments, line alignment and community consultation.

Feedback was positive, for the most part, said West LRT project director Jon Halford, noting every effort was made to tweak designs based on public consultations.

"But we can't please

everybody," Halford said.

Bus service will be flipped from its current east-west bias to a north-south orientation to better feed the line, Halford said, a fact Yvonne Schmitz, who rides the bus to and from downtown daily, said should make her life and travels much more efficient.

"We're far too dependent on the car," she said. "This is going to be a fabulous system."

The line is slated to open in December 2012. Another open house is set for Thursday at 7102 14 Ave. SW.

## America's Most Wanted nabbed downtown

KRISTA SYLVESTER  
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**ARREST** A convicted child molester of America's Most Wanted TV notoriety has been arrested in Calgary.

The Fugitive Apprehension Detail (FAD) received a tip from U.S. marshalls and yesterday arrested 49-year-old Steven Andrew Hayes on his downtown construction site in the 400 block of 11 Ave. SE.

"It's always good to get an offender of this nature off of the streets," FAD Sgt. Tony Manning said.

Hayes appeared on the show America's Most Wanted after he fled Lewisville, Tex., in 2005 where he was wanted for aggravated sexual assault of a child. He was convicted of sexually assaulting another young girl in 1997.

"We knew he worked in construction and was doing general labour where we found him," Manning said, adding police believe Hayes had been in Calgary since February this year.

Police believe Hayes was using documents that didn't belong to him in order to obtain a job, a social insurance number and get paid.

When Calgary police are finished interviewing Hayes they will turn him over to the Canada Border Services agency.

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# Man not seriously hurt after falling between rail cars

Centre Street C-Train Station was bustling with firefighters and EMS personnel yesterday around 7 a.m. as a man fell between two rail cars. The man, who fell when the car he was leaning against started to move, wasn't seriously injured. **METRO CALGARY**

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# Local



## High and dry at the Cecil

Booze will no longer flow at the Cecil Hotel Tavern as Calgary's chief licence inspector suspended its business licence effective immediately yesterday because it puts the "public at high risk." The decision is subject to a 30-day appeal period and the Hotel itself will remain open for now. **METRO CALGARY**



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## Cecil's next life as parking structure?

**MEETING** Lips were fairly tight about an in-camera land and asset strategy committee meeting yesterday unveiling the city's multimillion-dollar plan to purchase the notorious Cecil Hotel — paving the way for a possible parking structure in the downtown.

Committee vice-chair Ald. Andre Chabot couldn't fully comment until the deal was done, but did say the city has been building cash-in-lieu funds from city developments that will be spent on additional parking space downtown.

"There's a number of sites throughout the city that we're looking at and in light of the fact that we've just torn down a major parking facility, it's certainly a major interest of the City of Calgary and we're looking for more parking opportunities," Chabot said.

**NEIL MACKINNON/METRO CALGARY**

## Cars spin with tire shortage

**KRISTA SYLVESTER**  
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

**Calgary drivers who waited too long to get their winter tires might be out of luck.**

Many shops across the city are suffering from a shortage of tires, largely due to a new law in Quebec requiring all registered vehicles to have mandatory winter tires, according to Richmond Road OK Tire Store owner Mick Benoit.

"The shortage is directly related to the new law there, but at the same time, it's the same every year. People keep putting off getting their winter tires until it's too late," Benoit added.

Benoit said while many shops have a shortage of tires, he still has about 150 in stock.

"I was one of the smarter ones and ordered some earlier in the year," he said.

But Calgary mechanic



Mick Benoit, owner of OK Tire on Richmond Road SW, is sitting on some winter-tire stock, though a recent run on rubber has left other tire outlets with a shortage.

Tony Fey said while winter tires make a huge difference in the traction on the snowy roads, it doesn't matter if the person behind the wheel is

driving badly.

"It's 90 per cent the driver's fault, if they are going too fast for the conditions the tires won't stop them from sliding," Fey said. "You

have to drive slower in these conditions."

Most tires stores expect their inventory to be replenished in the New Year.

## Awards for media poverty coverage

**SUBMISSIONS** Entries are being sought for the 2008 Harry Chapin Media Awards administered by World Hunger Year.

The HCMA's honour print and electronic media for outstanding coverage of hunger and economic poverty. The awards are \$2,500 cash prizes in each of six categories: Newspaper, magazines, television/film, radio, photojournalism and books.

The deadline for submissions is Feb. 16, 2009. For more information, visit [www.whyhunger.org](http://www.whyhunger.org).

**METRO CALGARY**



WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

**Video** KLM Airlines announcement opens up the world for Calgary at [metronews.ca/local](http://metronews.ca/local).

**Video** Jon Stewart tackles Ottawa's political showdown at [metronews.ca/canada](http://metronews.ca/canada).





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## 4 local

**Netherlands flights back**  
After a 12-year absence from Calgary, Netherlands based KLM will start making five flights a week to Amsterdam beginning in May. **METRO CALGARY**



ROBIN KUNISKI/FOR METRO CALGARY

Kirti Bhadresa of the Calgary Dollars program encourages Calgarians to cash in on Calgary currency during tougher economic times.

## Calgary 'cash' counts

**KRISTA SYLVESTER**  
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**Get more bang for your buck this Christmas with the Calgary Currency dollar.**

Calgary Currency is a way for Calgarians to shop locally while the global economy is sinking, without having to spend a dollar of Canadian currency, the co-ordinator said.

"It's a way for people to spend money in Calgary and support the community while still getting great gifts for others during the holidays," Kirti Bhadresa

said.

Calgary Currency is actual money recognized from the government that looks like real money, but can only be spent among the participating individuals and organizations such as Broken City and Sunnyside Market.

"People can sign up and if they have something to offer to the community, we give them a complementary \$20 in Calgary currency to get started and get shopping," Bhadresa said.

It started as a barter system more than 10 years ago and has now evolved

into a local economy based on a community selling anything from homemade chocolates and soaps to clothing and accessories, she explained. The organization's biggest shopping event invites Calgarians out tonight to the Calgary Dollars Holiday Market from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association.

But Bhadresa said people don't need to worry if they don't have Calgary Currency yet.

"We're not discriminating, we also take Canadian dollars as well," she laughed.

## Brentwood plan steams ahead

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**HEARING** A pair of Crowchild Trail highrises will move ahead, but city council decided more work needs to be done by next June before the Brentwood Station revitalization plan

moves ahead full steam.

Clearly divided voices at Monday's public hearing may have been a good thing, said Ald. Druh Farrell, as it made more people aware of transit-oriented development. "But we could do a little more work to alleviate the fears people have," Farrell said.

Council also approved Farrell's motion to deal with the project in phases with community input at every stage and Ald. Ric McIver said if the work now being proposed was done before the public hearing, it would have been about one-tenth the size it was.

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Calgary EMS transferred a car-accident patient from a med-evac helicopter yesterday after it was diverted from its original destination. EMS transferred the patient, in serious condition, by ground to Foothills Hospital. **METRO CALGARY**



ROBIN KUNISKI FOR METRO CALGARY

## Well-heeled Angels bring gifts

KRISTA SYLVESTER  
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**Warming the city's disadvantaged from their "soles" to their hearts, a production line of Night Angels descended upon the city's homeless shelters last night bearing gifts.**

More than 30 volunteers from mortgage consulting company Invis gathered in the chill of winter's night

to deliver thousands of dollars worth of work boots, warm clothes and necessary items for those finding refuge in three city homeless shelters.

It's the sixth year, the Angels in the Night program brought warm boots for their feet and warm smiles to their faces, volunteer and mortgage broker, Lynda Webber said.

"It's just so important to give them a hand up, not just a hand out. They really

appreciate it and we couldn't be happier to do it," she said.

Another volunteer, Sue Black-Garland, said the items were luxuries that many in the shelter might not otherwise afford.

"It's hard for them. I mean a lot of them have jobs but something like work boots costs about \$200 dollars, so we like to help out," she added.

The Calgary Drop-In Centre's Louise Gallagher said

the staff members are almost as happy as the clients to receive the gifts year after year.

"It's really amazing to see and it makes us all so happy when they pull up with their truckload of gifts," she said.

Clients like Christopher James really appreciate the items.

"I think that's really cool of them. I really like that," he said as he watched the angels unload the items.

Angels in the Night deliver more than \$250,000 worth of goods to the Calgary Drop-In Centre as part of the Angels in the Night program. The program, created by mortgage consultants at Invis, will roll out in 11 Canadian cities.

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## Senior Samaritan robbed of life savings

KRISTA SYLVESTER  
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

**CRIME** An elderly woman attempting to do a good deed was robbed of almost her entire life savings, and police want to find the con artist.

A man contacted an 82-year-old woman by phone on Nov. 27 claiming to be a "bank investigator" and told her an employee was stealing from her and he needed her to withdraw \$5,000 and meet him.

"It's sad, this very smart and together woman thought she was helping the bank out, and in the end she is very disappointed and feels very silly," Acting Staff Sgt. Shawn Goertzen said.

The man managed to take most of her life savings, including money and gold coins worth more than \$50,000.

Police believe the suspect is a Caucasian male, about 55-years-old, well dressed, clean cut with an average build.

### News in brief

**BUDGET** In a pre-budget submission sent today to the federal Minister of Finance, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce recommends personal tax cuts to stimulate the economy. The chamber also calls for federally

elected officials to place the public interest above all else, including partisan politics, and focus on measures to improve investor and consumer confidence.

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**USA: ONE-WAY Tango Plus fares from Calgary. Travel must be completed by November 30, 2009.**

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**Sun: ONE-WAY fares from Calgary, for travel as indicated below.**

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\$229	\$289	\$299	\$339	\$390	\$400	\$424	\$539

**International: Fares are EACH WAY from Calgary and require ROUND-TRIP purchase. Departure dates as indicated below.**

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\$303	\$365	\$369	\$372	\$455	\$505	\$544	\$754

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F. Ladies D. Swarovski Crystals	REG: 250.00 SALE 187.50

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On average, 390 children under the age of 14 die every year from preventable injuries and 25,500 are hospitalized, according to Safe Kids Canada. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

**Preventable injuries hurting children**

# Canada

## Path cleared for Ignatieff to lead

Rae withdraws from Liberal leadership race

**Michael Ignatieff has seized his long-sought prize — the Liberal leadership — raising fresh questions about the future of the opposition coalition that has vowed to defeat the minority Conservatives next month.**

The fate of the coalition will be among the pressing issues facing Ignatieff as he prepares to take over the leadership of a party battered by cash woes, two lost elections and dismal poll numbers.

Late yesterday, Ignatieff paid tribute to the two candidates who had pulled out of the race and hailed the party for responding "quickly to changing circumstances to offer stability and leadership to Canadians."

The Liberal MP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore was assured of the leadership yesterday after Bob Rae — the last rival candidate in the race — dropped out, conceding he didn't have enough support to win in the party's stripped-down contest that left little time to sign up new backers.

Ignatieff, a runner-up in the 2006 contest that saw Stéphane Dion elected party leader, could take over as interim leader as early as today. That's when Liberal MPs and senators meet behind closed doors and are



Bob Rae and wife Arlene make their way through the snow to an Ottawa news conference yesterday where Rae withdrew from the Liberal leadership race.

expected to make their own recommendation that Ignatieff serve as interim leader.

Rae dismissed suggestions that a fast-track contest undercut Ignatieff's claim on the leadership.

"As far as I'm concerned, his leadership is entirely con-

stitutional, legitimate and appropriate and nobody should think anything differently," Rae said.

Ignatieff wasn't speaking publicly yesterday, but is expected to hold a news conference today after the caucus meeting.

**TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

### News in brief

**ONTARIO** In the supermarket and even out for a stroll, Premier Dalton McGuinty was pestered over the furor his government created with a plan to limit teen drivers to having no more than one teen passenger. That's why he gave in earlier this week and scrapped the move that was part of changes aimed at making Ontario roads safer for teens, who have higher accident rates.

**SURPLUS** Despite a slump in world oil prices, the Newfoundland and Labrador government said yesterday it expects to finish the fiscal year with more than \$1 billion in its pocket, CBC News Online

reports. Finance Minister Jerome Kennedy, however, laid out a set of dire warnings to accompany a fiscal update that projects a \$1.27-billion surplus for the current operating year.

**ECONOMY** The Canadian economy will get a solid boost from yesterday's Bank of Canada rate cut, but fiscal stimulus will also be needed, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said. "We don't need probably as much stimulus as the United States thinks it needs, but we're going to need a significant stimulus package and obviously to address some particular sectoral challenges as well," Harper told CBC Television.

**METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Bestiality, suicide questions OK for potential cops, Halifax decides

**POLYGRAPH** Allowing off-duty police to run polygraph tests for the force may be a conflict of interest, city officials say, but the controversial tests themselves will not change.

Applicants to police and fire departments must undergo polygraph screenings that include questions about having sex with animals and suicide.

The tests were contracted out to Integrity Personnel Screening, a company owned by two Halifax cops.

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# Welfare rates not meeting basic needs, report says

**Welfare incomes in Canada are increasingly inadequate to meet basic needs, according to a report to be released today in Toronto, with Ontario seeing the harshest loss over the past two decades.**

In 2007-dollar terms in Ontario, between 1992 and 2007, a lone parent's welfare declined by almost \$5,500 (from \$21,931) and a couple with two children saw a loss of almost \$8,150 (from \$29,207), says the report.

"When we do not grant even the basics needed for survival, how then can we honestly criticize the recipients of such assistance for lack of effort or decry behaviours that offer relief from

such a miserable existence?" says the National Council of Welfare report.

Payouts for most of Canada's 1.7 million adults and children on welfare have dropped dramatically over the past 20 years and fall well below the poverty line, says the report, which looked at provincial and federal assistance for those on welfare from 1986 to 2007.

**"How then can we honestly criticize the recipients of such assistance for lack of effort or decry behaviours that offer relief from such a miserable existence?"**

National Council of Welfare report

The report shows the biggest loss in welfare incomes was in Ontario in 1995

under the Mike Harris Conservative government when welfare for able-bodied people was cut by 21.6 per cent and frozen for everyone for the next nine years.

**TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

## Mourning Ted Rogers funeral



Loretta Rogers, centre, and family members watch as the casket of her late husband Ted Rogers, president and CEO of Rogers Communications, leaves the church following funeral services in Toronto yesterday. Rogers was 75 when he died Dec. 2.

## Charest downplays PQ vote

**QUEBEC** The day after his tepid election victory, Premier Jean Charest found himself examining the sovereignist resurgence in Quebec.

The Parti Québécois, led by Pauline Marois, fared better than anyone had predicted in Monday's election.

At his post-election news conference at the National Assembly yesterday, Charest, whose Liberals won

66 seats, three more than the majority threshold, dismissed suggestions that the PQ resurgence meant sovereignty beckoned.

"Take that with a grain of salt," Charest said. "The issue in this election was the economy ... That transcends all other issues."

**"The issue in this election was the economy ... That transcends all other issues."**

Jean Charest

**TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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**Bush wants Mugabe to step down**

The African Union rejected tougher action against Zimbabwe yesterday, while U.S. President George W. Bush joined calls for President Robert Mugabe to step down. **REUTERS**

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# World

## Greek rioters target parliament

Opposition calls for government to quit

**Riot police battled protesters outside Greece's parliament and in Athens suburbs yesterday, while opposition socialists called for the conservative government to quit in order to end the worst civil unrest in decades.**

Rows of riot police squared off with demonstrators for more than an hour outside the parliament building before firing tear gas to disperse the crowd in fresh violence triggered by the shooting of a 15-year-old boy by police.

Bands of young protesters regrouped and threw stones at police, chanting:

### Emergency talks

• Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, whose New Democracy party has a one-seat majority, held emergency talks with the president and opposition leaders to urge them to close ranks against the rioters.

"Let parliament burn!"

On the fourth day of violence, protests spread to the Athens suburbs after the funeral of the boy, Alexandros Grigoropoulos, whose killing on Saturday triggered Greece's worst riots in decades, fanned by

discontent over government and a slowing economy.

More than 5,000 people clad in black gathered at the cemetery, many chanting: "Cops, Pigs, Murderers!" As the boy's flower-covered white coffin was being buried, protesters clashed with police outside and one officer fired shots in the air to disperse an angry crowd.

His killing touched a raw nerve among young Greeks, outraged at years of political scandals and rising levels of poverty and unemployment, worsened by the global economic downturn.

**REUTERS**

## India Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha



Indian Muslims pray together to mark Eid al-Adha on a busy road in Mumbai yesterday. Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al-Adha to mark the end of the hajj.

### News in brief

**PAKISTAN** U.S. President George W. Bush said yesterday the United States has made it clear to Pakistan that it will do whatever is necessary to protect American soldiers and civilians. Tensions have cropped up between the U.S. and Pakistan over U.S. drone strikes in pursuit of militants in the border region with Afghanistan.

**ARREST** Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich was arrested yesterday on corruption charges, including that he tried to sell the U.S. Senate seat vacated by fellow Democrat and president-elect Barack Obama. **REUTERS**

## Women happier sex: Poll

**STUDY** Men are happier with money, while women find greater joy in friendships and relationships with their children, co-workers and bosses, a new global survey reveals.

The online survey of 28,153 people in more than 51 countries by global marketing and information firm Nielsen found that as the world grapples with a recession and financial markets remain volatile, many people are reminding themselves that money can't buy happiness.

The Nielsen happiness

study found that globally, women are happier than men in 48 of the 51 countries surveyed in April 2008, and only in Brazil, South Africa and Vietnam were men found to be happier than women.

"Because they are happier with non-economic factors, women's happiness is more recession-proof, which might explain why women around the world are happier in general than men are," Nielsen vice-president of consumer research Bruce Paul said in a statement.

**REUTERS**

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# Mumbai planners may be blacklisted

**An Indian government minister urged the UN Security Council yesterday to help punish anyone responsible for the deadly attacks in Mumbai by adding them to a UN terrorism blacklist.**

"We have requested the Security Council to proscribe the Pakistani group Jamaat-ud-Dawa since it is a terrorist outfit," Indian Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed told a special meeting of the Security Council on terror-

ism.

"All those who were in any way responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attacks, wherever they may be, should be brought to justice," he said.

The charity Jamaat-ud-Dawa is widely regarded as a front for the Islamist militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which India says was behind the Mumbai attacks that killed 179 people.

Ahamed said he wanted the group added to the list

**"All those who were in any way responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attacks, wherever they may be, should be brought to justice."**

E. Ahamed, Indian Minister of State for External Affairs

of individuals and groups facing travel bans and asset freezes under Security Council resolution 1267, which imposed sanctions on supporters of al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban.

Without naming them, Ahamed said "other such organizations" should also be blacklisted "and effective sanctions imposed against them."

Pakistan's UN ambassador Abdullah Hussain Ha-

room told the council Islamabad was ready to support such measures.

Ahamed also made clear that New Delhi expected Islamabad to act decisively against any militants operating in Pakistan who might have been involved in preparing the attacks.

He said that India had acted with restraint so far though his country might feel compelled to take action in the future and would be justified in doing so. **REUTERS**

Nuclear negotiations continue in N. Korea

**WEAPONS** Nuclear-disarmament negotiators gathered to discuss an agreement on rules about monitoring North Korea's nuclear activities in Beijing today as six-party talks entered their third day.

North Korea partly disabled its Yongbyon nuclear facility this year in a disarmament-for-aid deal, but the talks have so far failed to agree on a protocol to check the North's declaration of nuclear activities and move disarmament forward. **REUTERS**

## Brazil Native protests



JAMIL BATTAR/REUTERS

Native Brazilian Indians protest against a possible rule by the Supreme Court of the end of legality of an Indian reservation yesterday.

## Waves destroy homes and flood hospitals in Papua New Guinea

**DISASTER** Huge waves caused by king tides smashed into dozens of villages and towns in northern Papua New Guinea, destroying homes and flooding businesses and a hospital.

Authorities said there were no reports of casualties, but they were still trying to contact several outlying islands after the waves hit across an 800-km stretch of yesterday.

Hundreds of people were left homeless.

The waves struck PNG's north coast near the town of Wewak and islands to the northeast, such as New Ireland.

"Huge waves that lasted for about six hours lashed these areas and created pools as deep as two metres, sending sediment and debris flooding into homes and businesses," reported The National newspaper.

New Ireland disaster co-ordinator Elsie Wambun told The Post Courier newspaper the sea rose up to 1.5 metres. Papua New Guinea lies on a zone of volcanic activity which accounts for 75 per cent of the world's volcanoes. **REUTERS**

## News in brief

**SAFETY** Car crashes, drownings and other accidents kill 830,000 children worldwide each year, a surprisingly large figure, the World Health Organization said in a report. The report compiled information from 200 experts around the world.

**HEALTH** Being overweight or obese may increase the likelihood of having severe headaches and migraines, a new study from Atlanta suggests.

An increased prevalence of headaches may be associated with being

underweight as well. **REUTERS**

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# World oil demand falls for first time in decades

**Global oil demand will contract this year and next for the first time since the early 1980s as the world economy slows to a near standstill, the U.S. government said yesterday.**

The forecast is bad news for energy companies and oil producing nations that depend on robust prices, but could benefit cash-strapped consumers by sending gasoline and heating costs lower, according to a U.S. Energy Informa-

tion Administration report.

The report, which marked the first major forecast for shrinking energy demand tied to the current global financial crisis, triggered a nearly four per cent slide in crude oil futures on the New York Mercantile Exchange yesterday.

The lower demand forecast came as the EIA revised down its projection for 2009 global economic

## Why the drop?

- World oil demand will fall by 50,000 barrels per day in 2008 and 450,000 barrels per day next year, the EIA said.
- The decrease is led by a 1.2 million bpd contraction in top consumer the United States this year and a further 200,000 bpd drop in 2009.

growth to 0.5 per cent next year, from the 1.8 per cent projection it made in its previous report issued in November.

"The current global eco-

nomics slowdown is now projected to be more severe and longer ... leading to further reductions of global energy demand and additional declines in

crude oil and other energy prices," the EIA said.

The last time world petroleum demand fell was in 1983, part of four years of straight declines in oil consumption that began in 1980, the agency said.

The weak economy and lower petroleum demand has already caused U.S. crude oil prices to sink more than \$100 from a record \$147 a barrel in July — a slump that has rattled energy producing nations

like Saudi Arabia, Russia and Venezuela, and triggered massive cutbacks in investment in oil projects like those in Canada's oil-sands.

Demand still is expected to grow next year in emerging economies such as China, which helped drive the six-year rally in oil prices to record highs.

Still, the latest EIA report revised demand from this group down by 40,000 bpd.

REUTERS

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## Colombia Former hostages



Former hostages Ingrid Betancourt and Oscar Lizcano stand next to former FARC rebel Wilson Bueno (alias Isaza) yesterday. The 12-year veteran whose surrender in October has been a public-relations coup for Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, became the first guerrilla to be rewarded for surrendering with hostage Lizcano. He will get a \$400,000 US bounty and asylum in France.

## Japanese housewives tighten their belts as economy slides

**SPENDING** Japan's homemakers have made an art of living frugally in one of the world's most expensive countries, and they are now pruning spending further as the economy plunges into what could be a long recession.

For many of Japan's 17 million homemakers, managing household finances on their husband's salary, averaging about 270,000 yen a month (about \$2,900 US), is already a struggle.

As layoffs spread, consumer confidence has nosedived. Household

spending, which makes up more than half the economy, dropped 3.8 per cent in October, sparking a vicious cycle that is hurting retailers and will likely put more jobs at risk.

As shoppers turned their backs on such high-priced goods, sales at department stores have fallen. They dropped nearly 7 per cent in October on the same period the previous year.

Instead, shoppers hit bargain stores. Discount clothing chain Uniqlo saw a jump in sales of more than 30 per cent in November.

REUTERS

## News in brief

**RULING** A judge in Brazil dismissed negligence charges yesterday against two U.S. pilots accused of having contributed to Brazil's second-

worst air disaster. A Boeing 737 crashed into the jungle from an altitude of 37,000 feet, killing all 154 people on board.

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# Comment & Views

## Let's retire the Queen

Canada needs to grow up and end an outdated practice

### The WestView



With apologies to Paul McCartney ... Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl, but why is she running my country?

As I've watched the remarkable events of the past week unfold, the most remarkable was the spectacle of Stephen Harper, hat in hand, tugging his forelock in the general direction of Michaëlle Jean, Mrs. Windsor's representative in Ottawa.

You're familiar with Mrs. Windsor? That nice old lady in London with the coris and the celebrity grandchildren? Her Majesty?

There hasn't been a lot of talk about the suitability of that exchange; I guess because most of us are relieved that Ms. Jean, a former Radio-Canada reporter with not one iota of experience in governance, just granted the prime minis-

ter's wish, and Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition doesn't get to run the country, at least not yet.

But why do Mrs. Windsor and her envoy still run the country? Until last week, they have been little more than glorified lawn ornaments. Inviting them to your charity garden party adds instant class. But what if Ms. Jean, who probably doesn't like Mr. Harper any more than Mr. Harper likes her, had decided to give the reins of power to Stéphane Dion and the balance of power to Chief Blothead Gilles Duceppe?

For one thing, we'd hear a lot more squawking about how it's time to end this out-

dated ridiculous subservience to Prince Charles' Mom. Instead, a grateful nation has

decided to put aside any qualms about Ms. Jean, her former French citizenship, her rumoured separatist leanings, her absurd appointment as the Queen's representative, never mind the innate, fundamental absurdity of the Queen herself.

So what happens in January if Her Majesty's Loyal Etc. try to stick it to

Stephen one more time? Back he goes, gripping his forelock, to visit Ms.

Jean, and she informs him that "we are not amused," and turns the government over to Michael or Rae and their little dog Jack? She can do that! She's Mrs.

**We should send Ms. Jean back to Radio-Canada, tell Mrs. Windsor that it's time to retire as the Queen of Canada, thanks for the memories.**

Windsor's envoy. Mrs. Windsor runs the country!

I simply can't believe we're still letting this happen. Here's what we need to do: Immediately, as a nation,

we should grow up.

Then, we should send Ms. Jean back to Radio-Canada, tell Mrs. Windsor that it's time to retire as the Queen of Canada, thanks for the memories. Then we elect a president at large (as everyone mistakenly believes they vote for the prime minister anyway), while preserving the parliamentary democracy that we've come to know and love.

We do this through proportional representation, so we get the parties and the policies we want exactly in proportion to the popular vote. Now that's democracy.

And God Save Mrs. Windsor for another day.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting.



GETTY IMAGES



MICHAEL DE ADDER

### Letters

#### Election worth the price tag

At this point, the Liberal-NDP coalition will try to take power, almost certainly no matter what, on the principle that they can. There is no attempts to engage in dialogue with the Tories, no attempt to compromise.

If this is allowed to proceed, every election which fails to give one party a majority will become a free-for-all, as all the parties try to form coalitions.

Let's go to the polls and let the people have their say — Tory or a Liberal-NDP-Bloc government. The cost of another election is small for getting a government which everyone will agree was actually elected by the people.

DAMIAN KANAREK, TORONTO

#### Thank goodness for women's voices on politics

Until recently, it was unusual to see women writing in the Comments section under regional and national media print and online political stories. That has changed, and now we see some thoughtful comments from women in among mostly male comments.

I say thank goodness. It's about time that women

spoke up — after all they are about 50 per cent of eligible voters.

Too many women stayed away from the polls this last October election — I don't expect that to happen in those numbers next election as women realize they can make a difference.

DON WILSON, MASSTOWN, N.S.

#### MPs proroguing pay?

As a gesture to help the economy, will the members of Parliament be proroguing their salaries during their extended leave of absence?

BERNIE MERRETT, TORONTO

#### Kudos to editorial cartoonist

I have particularly enjoyed the small editorial cartoons in Metro.

Editorial cartoonists have a unique talent of highlighting the crux of the issue and giving readers a better appreciation and understanding of the issue. Michael de Adder's cartoons are clean and not cluttered. I put him in the class of Aislin (Montreal Gazette), Norris and Peterson. His cartoons are an invaluable addition to Metro and provide interesting and stimulating inclusion in our household.

Keep up the good work.

FRANKLIN CHOW, OTTAWA

### Word on the street: What's the best holiday gift you've ever received?

#### Rayvan Mills

age 16, Calgary

A: A movie, V for Vendetta, it's my favourite.

#### Van Le

age 18, Calgary

A: I think the best gift I've ever got was a PS2 game.

#### Terence Doerksen

age 30, Edmonton

A: I got these two big castles as a kid and I spent all Christmas with my dad putting everything together.

#### Ken Neufeld

age 47, Edmonton

A: While I was growing up, I got a crane and you had to assemble it and constantly move stuff around.

#### Brian Stephenson

age 62, Toronto

A: Really the best gift I could ever get is the chance to spend Christmas with my family.

#### Jen Seymour

age 21, Abbotsford, B.C.

A: An engagement ring. We were in Whistler on Christmas Eve in a chocolate shop and it was snowing.



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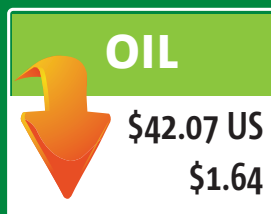


**Great-West Lifeco to issue \$1 billion in shares**

Great-West Lifeco Inc., Canada's second-largest life insurance company, said yesterday it plans to issue \$1 billion in common shares to the public and to its controlling shareholder, Power Financial Corp., to improve its capital strength. **REUTERS**

# Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA



## TSX slides on recession talk

**Toronto's main stock index fell yesterday as the Bank of Canada's acknowledgment that the country is entering a recession hit heavily weighted financial shares, while lower oil prices weighed on some energy stocks.**

The comments managed to sideswipe shares of banks and insurers given their close link to the economy, which sent the financial index down 5.34 per cent and stripped it of all

### Bank of Canada cuts interest rate

• The central bank cut its interest rate more aggressively than most economists had expected, bringing it to its lowest level since 1958 and declaring for the first time that the

the gains recorded in the previous session.

"All this talk about a recession really affects sentiment for the banks and financials because they are

economy is in recession. It lowered the overnight target rate by three-quarters of a percentage point to 1.5 per cent due to a worse global downturn than anticipated.

heavily exposed to the economy," said Elvis Picardo, analyst and strategist at Global Securities in Vancouver. "And it's been frustrating for investors that

the markets are simply unable to put together a string of successive advances."

The slide followed the market's 450-point rally Monday and extended a pattern that has been firmly in place for months, where big gains are almost always followed by triple-digit losses.

The S&P/TSX composite index closed down 169.56 points, or 1.98 per cent, at 8,397.56. **REUTERS**

## Downturn expected to flatten telecom profit

**FORECAST** Profits for the telecom industry will become flatter in the face of falling demand due to the worsening economy and new competition in the wireless market, according to a forecast yesterday by

the Conference Board of Canada.

The outlook forecast annual combined profits of about \$7 billion between 2008 and 2011.

The board had calculated that industry profits for

2006 and 2007 were \$5.6 billion and \$6.5 billion, respectively.

At the forefront of the industry's woes is the collapse of the BCE buyout, the biggest leveraged buyout in the world, which

was derailed after KPMG said the deal would leave BCE insolvent.

Though demand for wireless services is driving growth, "profit levels will remain flat over the next few years." **REUTERS**

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University of Alberta offensive lineman Simeon Rottier was named yesterday to participate in the East-West Shrine game next month in Houston. Rottier joins Etienne Legare, a Laval defensive lineman, as the two Canadians chosen. The game is a showcase of top U.S. college football players and will be played Jan 17. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

# Sports

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## Halak, Lang down Flames

### NHL RESULT

Flames 1 Canadiens 4



LAURENCE HEINEN  
for Metro Calgary

**THE SKINNY:** Calgary's two-game winning streak ended as Robert Lang scored twice, including his team-leading 10th of the season, and added an assist to lead the Canadiens to their 16th victory of the season.

**THE BAD BREAK:** After the Flames carried the majority of the play in the early going, Lang backhanded a shot that bounced off of Miikka Kiprusoff's left pad before hitting Calgary defenceman Mark Giordano on its way into the net.



Jarome Iginla looks to challenge Patrice Brisebois last night.

**THE GAME-WINNER:** Kiprusoff tried to poke check the puck off the stick of rookie forward Matt D'Agostini, who instead made a quick deke to his backhand before scoring his fourth goal in as many games for the Habs.

**THE FIRST STAR:** Jaroslav Halak took advantage of a rare start and made 32 saves to record his first victory since Oct. 20.

**THE QUOTE:** "It's been a while," Halak told Rogers Sportsnet. "Every time I play it's a big

## K-Rod to Mets

The New York Mets have agreed to a three-year deal with free-agent closer Francisco Rodriguez, ESPN reported yesterday. Rodriguez's deal, worth \$37 million US, is pending a physical, which the New York Post reports will take place today. Rodriguez broke the Major League saves record last season for the Angels with 62.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

## Melrose lets fly on Lightning

**NHL** While a guest on Toronto's FAN 590 radio station yesterday, ex-Tampa Bay Lightning coach Barry Melrose sounded off on his former club, saying that during his short tenure he dealt with constant interference from the organization.

"I had guys in Tampa who wanted to run the team and I wouldn't let them. I was hired to coach and I coached," Melrose said. "Every day was a constant battle." Melrose was fired less than a month ago, only 16 games into the season. In the 11 games they have played since, Tampa Bay has only won once. When asked if that made him happy, he said, "yeah it does, and any coach who tells you otherwise is a liar," Melrose told the FAN.

"I hope Tampa Bay doesn't win a game in the next year," Melrose said. "Right now he's just not strong enough physically to play against defencemen who are 6-3 or 6-4 that can skate as good as him."

"Steven is not ready for the NHL," Melrose said. "Right now he's just not strong enough physically to play against defencemen who are 6-3 or 6-4 that can skate as good as him."

"I hope Tampa Bay doesn't win a game in the next year," Melrose said. "Right now he's just not strong enough physically to play against defencemen who are 6-3 or 6-4 that can skate as good as him."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

## Petitclerc takes Lou Marsh Trophy

After winning five gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games, wheelchair racer Chantal Petitclerc has today been awarded the Lou Marsh Trophy as Canada's top athlete this year.

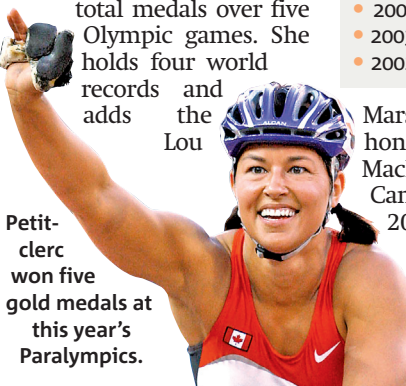
A panel made up of sports journalists and luminaries from around the country judges the award, named for the former Toronto Star sports editor.

Competing at Beijing in the T54 class for athletes with different levels of spinal cord injuries and amputations, she won the 200- and 800-metre races within 90 minutes of each other,

setting two world records.

She also won the 400 in record time and the 100 before finishing up in the 1,500 with a win by more than one second over her closest rival. Overall, Petitclerc won 14 golds and 21 total medals over five Olympic games. She holds four world records and adds the Lou

Petitclerc won five gold medals at this year's Paralympics.



### Recent winners Lou Marsh Trophy

- 2008: Chantal Petitclerc
- 2007: Sidney Crosby
- 2006: Cindy Klassen
- 2005: Steve Nash
- 2004: Adam van Koeverden
- 2003: Mike Weir
- 2002: Catriona Le May Doan

Marsh to her many other honours, including Maclean's magazine's Canadian of the Year in 2004. Petitclerc joins Rick Hansen as one of two wheelchair athletes to win the Lou Marsh Trophy.

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# Automotive

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EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA



## More zoom for Mazda3

Megaseller's feisty spirit alive and well in revamped model

JIM ROBINSON  
for Metro Canada

Imagine you're in the shoes of Yoshiyuki Meada. He's the program manager for the 2010 Mazda3 and his job is to fix something that isn't broken.

One of every three Mazda vehicles sold around the world is a Mazda3. In Canada, the Mazda3 has improved in sales every year since it was introduced in 2003. In fact, 2008 will set another sales record, with people lining up to get a little Zoom Zoom in their lives.

What Meada did was take the overall Mazda3 design concept and keep what was working and refine the rest.

To get everyone on board, he insisted on designers and engineers from Mazda's styling centres visiting each other's countries to talk about the car and learn what consumers in different parts of the world were thinking. His idea was to instill what Mazda calls "the emotion of motion."

Although the 2010 and the current Mazda3 have virtually the same dimensions, much attention was paid to aerodynamics with things like panels under the body to smooth air flow with the car's overall coefficient of drag going from 0.31 down to 0.29.

The biggest visual change is the much-enlarged grille. While it retains the Mazda five-point design, the wide mouth is there, not just for improved cooling, but is an actual part of the aero package.

The cabin area underwent not just a major redesign with liberal use of soft-touch materials, but the switch to what Mazda



The 2010 Mazda3 sees a host of changes designed to improve on the outgoing model that was one of the most successful cars in the history of the company.

### 2010 Mazda3

**Type:** Compact sedan  
**Price:** Not available  
**Engine:** 2.0-litre DOHC inline four-cylinder; 2.5-litre DOHC inline four-cylinder  
**HP:** 148-167

#### Highlights

- Front-wheel drive
- Fuel-efficient
- Aerodynamic

calls a Zone Layout.

Instrumentation is placed in zones of importance based on eye movement, the primary ones being the large tachometre on the left and speedometer on the right in pods directly in the line of sight of the driver.

Housed in a second zone is a Multi Information Display (MID) on the centre of the dash and raised 100 mm higher and to the right of the main gauges. Positioned here, it is still in the line of sight. Depending on the model and options, it shows fuel consumption, distance and



The interior of the 2010 Mazda3 is much changed, including a second-tier Multi Information Display (MID) at the top of the centre stack.

play (MID) on the centre of the dash and raised 100 mm higher and to the right of the main gauges. Positioned here, it is still in the line of sight. Depending on the model and options, it shows fuel consumption, distance and

even a 3.5-inch colour navigation screen.

The four-door sedan tested here will arrive in the early spring along with a five-door Sportback hatch in three levels of trim: GX, GS and GT.

The 2.0-litre, DOHC in-

line four-cylinder engine that helped Mazda3 sales take off in 2008 is offered on the GX and GS.

It produces 148 hp and 135 lb/ft of torque and comes with as standard five-speed automatic transmission or optional five-speed automatic driving the front wheels.

Fuel consumption numbers for the 2.0-litre manual and automatic are 8.1/5.9L/100 km city/highway and 8.6L/5.9L/100 km city/highway respectively.

Pricing will not be announced until early in January but it should be pretty much the same at the 2009, with the base car starting around \$17,000.

While my time with this car was brief, there's little doubt the Zoom Zoom spirit is alive and well in the 2010 Mazda3.

## Winter safety on thin ice

**SURVEY** A recent GMAC Insurance survey in the U.S. revealed many drivers are stumped when it comes to proper safety procedures for winter weather driving.

Of the more than 5,000 licensed drivers surveyed across the nation, GMAC Insurance found several startling facts about driver competency during frozen or snowy conditions:

- 46 per cent were unaware their gas tank should be at least half full in order to continue providing heat in case of an emergency.
- 38 per cent didn't know driving while using cruise control, even in clear conditions, could be dangerous.
- 24 per cent did not know to turn the wheel in the direction of a skid.

One of the most significant misconceptions revealed in the survey was in regards to vehicles equipped with four-wheel drive. While four-wheel drive helps with traction in snow and ice, it does not replace good driving practices and taking the right precautions to stay safe.

Nevertheless, the GMAC Insurance survey showed that 70 per cent of drivers may exhibit a false sense of security when driving in snowy weather if their vehicle was equipped with four-wheel drive:

- 37 per cent feel they are less likely to have an accident.
- 21 per cent would drive during and right after a snowstorm.
- Nine per cent would feel superior to cars without four-wheel drive.
- Three per cent would drive faster than they would with only two-wheel drive.

less... blah  
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# Honda's got speed

JIM ROBINSON  
for Metro Canada



The "fun" of motoring can be seen by some (many) as frivolous in these days where gasoline prices here can be affected overnight by storms and rebellions half a world away.

To me, a car is a form of time machine that lets you cover distances in one hour that would have been mind-boggling to those living in 1808.

Driving is hard work especially on super highways where the average speed is greater than that of airplanes a century ago. It takes concentration and, as we all know, it isn't cheap.

So that's why, in my opinion, occasionally enjoying the freedom a car can give is something to be savoured.

Which brings me around to the 2008 Honda S2000, a roadster you don't see a lot, but is considered by some as

## 2008 Honda S2000

**Type:** Performance roadster  
**Price:** \$50,600  
**Engine:** 2.2-litre, DOHC inline four-cylinder engine  
**HP:** 237

### Highlights

- Rear-wheel drive
- Well-equipped
- Affordable roadster

one of the great sportscars of the market and a sure collector car in the future.

When you look at it objectively, it's really a decade old and should be well behind current levels of performance and handling. But that's not the case.

I first saw what was to become the S2000 in 1995. It was a concept car called the SSM and about the size of a Mazda Miata. Frankly, it did not have the perky looks of the Miata so I dismissed it as just another exercise to

gauge public reaction.

But Honda had other ideas. It re-emerged in 1999 to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the company that was taking place in 2000, thus the name. It also was the turning of the millennium, so Honda poured all its expertise into the car.

Incorporating the knowledge gained from Formula One and IndyCar, it had an engine of just 2.0-litres displacement with a carbon-

fibre reinforced block and super-light forged-alloy pistons.

Because this car was designed from the outset to rev to 9,000 rpm, special bearing alloys were used right out of IndyCar. Producing an amazing 240 hp, albeit at 8,600 rpm in the year 2000, the powerplant set new production car standards for volumetric efficiency.

Today the engine is larger at 2.2-litres producing 237 hp

at 8,000 rpm with 162 lb/ft of torque. It remains today as the highest specific horsepower/litre normally aspirated production engine on the market. Fuel consumption is listed as 11.8L/100 km city and 8.4L/100 km highway.

The front/rear weight distribution is a perfect 50/50 thanks to the engine sitting back so far back that it is almost mid-engined.

As you can guess, the S2000 is all about revs, or bet-

ter yet, keeping them up.

From launch, you ease in the clutch and you feed in the gas sharply then go for second asap.

After that, the traction starts to kick in and you soon find the combination of a stiff platform, compliant suspension and ability to squirt and turn thanks to the 50/50 weight bias results in a very pointable car. In fact, the turning radius is a tight 5.7 metres.



The S2000 roadster retains much of what Honda has learned in Formula One and IndyCar racing for a superbly balanced roadster.

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With a striking new look, the 2009 Dodge Ram full-size pickup truck was reduced an average \$2,200 across the board compared to the 2008 model, and then given an average of \$2,500 in extra content.

# Trucking with the times

JIM ROBINSON  
for Metro Canada

## Is Canada ready for a new, full-size pickup truck?

At the launch of the 2009 Dodge Ram, Chrysler Canada president, Reid Bigland, pointed out, that despite fuel costs, Canadians are still buying 22,000 new big pickups every month.

Dodge, like all manufacturers, saw the fuel price surge coming, perhaps not so suddenly, and designed the next generation Ram to meet (they hope) a sea change in how we work and travel.

The 2009 Ram offers 13 per cent more power, nine per cent more torque and a fuel efficiency increase of four per cent.

Dodge also lowered the price over the 2008 Ram by an average \$2,200 per model and then built in an average of \$2,500 in added features.

The 2009 Dodge Ram will be offered in regular cab, Quad Cab and Crew Cab (new to RAM this year) configurations, with three box lengths: eight-foot (regular cab), six-foot-four-inches (regular cab and Quad Cab) and a new-for-2009 box length of five-foot-seven-inches (Ram Crew 1500).

Dodge says they all fit inside a standard-sized garage. The Ram Crew 1500 offers a claimed first-in-segment cargo management system



An innovation available on some models is the Ram Box that creates two lockable compartments in the unused bed walls.

called the RamBox.

It is weatherproof, lockable, illuminated and has drainable storage compartments integrated into both fender sides for quick access and convenience.

Each box holds up to five cases (120 cans) of 12-ounce beverages. Total capacity is 7.4 cubic feet, slightly more than the capacity of a 55-gallon drum.

There are three engine choices starting with a new-generation 5.7-litre Hemi that produces a claimed best-in-class 390 hp and 407 lb/ft of torque. The middle engine is a 4.7-litre V8 making 310 and 330 lb/ft of torque.

Last is a 3.7-litre V6 generating 215 hp and 235 lb/ft of torque. The powertrains came further mixed and matched with four- and five-speed automatic transmissions; part-time and on-demand four-wheel-drive transfer cases;

and four different axle ratios.

There are four trim levels offered: ST, SLT, Sport and Laramie. As you can imagine, there are also thousands of variations in pricing, but for just the rear-drive models they range from \$25,995-\$30,295 for the ST; SLT, \$28,395-\$34,190; Sport, \$31,895-\$37,690 and Laramie, \$40,695-\$42,190.

And they can be fast too. With the new Hemi, the Dodge Ram R/T (special trim level of the Sport) regular-cab 4x2 model with a short bed and 4:10 gears blasts from 0-60 mph in less than six seconds. That's better than many sportscars I've tested.

It's also one of the safest vehicles on the road, not to mention safest trucks, offering 35 active and passive safety features, including standard front and rear side-curtain air bags with

## 2009 Dodge Ram

**Type:** Full-size pickup truck

**Price:** From \$25,995 to \$42,190

**Engine:** 3.7-litre, DOHC V6 (215 hp, 235 lb/ft); 4.7-litre OHV V8 (310 hp, 330 lb/ft); 5.7-litre OHV V8 (390 hp, 407 lb/ft).

## Highlights

- More fuel efficient
- Many trim levels
- Great traction



The interior of the 2009 Ram was totally redone and now features much higher-grade materials.

Enhanced Accident Response System, knee bolsters, adjustable rear head restraints, remote keyless entry, seat belt pre-tensioners, and Anti-lock Brake System, among others.

Despite how fast the Canadian automotive landscape is changing, pickups still account for 16.5 per cent of all vehicles sales in Canada, and that's a number any automaker would be foolish to ignore.

## Automotive in brief

**AWARDS** Three 2009 Kia Motors vehicles won Best Buy or Recommended awards from Consumer Guide in the U.S. The Rondo CUV was picked as

a Best Buy, while the Rio subcompact sedan/hatchback and Sedona minivan were named as Recommended vehicles.

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## 22

Global airlines are heading into their worst business crisis in 50 years with carriers facing possible collapse, revenues tumbling and hundreds of thousands of jobs at risk, the industry body IATA said yesterday. **REUTERS**

# Travel

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## Top spots to ring in new year

**ROMINA McGUINNESS**  
Metro World News



**"So, what are your plans for New Year's Eve?" is probably among the questions we dread the most. As the most hyped-up night of the year, Dec. 31 is a bit like an insanely successful sibling — almost impossible to live up to.**

Somehow, you always hear about some "friend of a friend" who hosts the most mind-blowing New Year's parties, whereas all you can remember from last year is the sound of your grandfather clock chiming 12.

The best solution is to go abroad. Whatever you do will be new and exciting — and just saying you jumped on a plane will make you sound exotic.

**Guzzle some grapes in Madrid**

**Where to be at midnight:** The central square of Puerta del Sol

**Why:** The Madrileños are known as Los Gatos, or cats, thanks to their love of a good party and ability to go without sleep. After a traditional family dinner, the New Year's celebrations take off around the city's main square, the Puerta del Sol. The countdown is followed from the clock on the Casa de Correos building and the tradition is to eat 12 grapes, one on each chime of the clock. Toast 2009 with a glass of cava and throw

some confetti in the air, to mark the real start of the party.

**Dress code:** The Spaniards believe that good luck comes to those who wear red underwear on the night, so build your outfit from there.

**Next day cure:** Chocolate con churros: dip these crispy deep-fried doughnuts into hot chocolate that's as thick as soil.

**Sail the seas in Rio de Janeiro**

**Where to be at midnight:** Copacabana Beach

**Why:** Be amongst the 2.5 million people to celebrate the Véspera de Ano Novo by partaking in a ritual dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea, Deity Lemanja. An African tradition, people make little boats bearing the goddess' image, which are launched and left to float on the ocean. People also arrive armed with gifts including white flowers, candles and champagne as an offering to the goddess. Stay on to witness the exuberant firework displays on show after the clock strikes 12.

**Dress code:** White bikini or swimming trunks.

**Next day cure:** If you're still there, take another dip in the ocean, then head for Café do Forte, a magnificent coffee stop with views stretching across Copacabana bay.

**Bogmanay mania in Edinburgh**

**Where to be at midnight:**



TONY WARS PHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Hogmanay celebrations in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Hogmanay Street Party, Princes Street

**Why:** The Hogmanay street party is one of the most traditional but liveliest ways to waltz into the New Year. Live music stages and a variety of comic acts form an irresistible party on the last night of the year. Try book a ticket to the evening's Concert in the Garden starting at 9 p.m. on Princes Street. This year, Groove Armada and solo artist Paolo Nutini will rock your way into the New Year. Be sure to squeeze in the fireworks display and a glimpse at the eerie views of Edinburgh Castle by night.

**Dress code:** Tradition might forbid you from wearing anything under your kilt, but otherwise layer up. This is Scotland, and an open-air street party we're talking about.

**Next day cure:** Brunch at Montpeliers, located on the so-called Posh End of Bruntsfield Place. Collapse

on the plush leather sofa seats and lazily watch the world go by whilst eating a warm courgette frittata.

**Be the first to celebrate in Sydney**

**Where to be at midnight:** Sydney Harbour Bridge

**Why:** Make your way over to the Harbour's shores and be one of the first people to toast 2009. As the first major themed fireworks event of the night, its no wonder Sydney's skyline becomes a dazzling display of booms, bangs and sparkling lights. If you're not scared of the crowd, head over to either of the two iconic vantage points of The Opera House and Mrs Macquarie's Point where views are famously spectacular.

**Dress code:** Flip-flops, you don't want to spend the evening with your fancy high heels stuck in the sand.

**Next day cure:** A chilled picnic by the harbour should settle spirits.

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**Travel time**

Forty per cent of U.S. business travellers expect to travel less often in 2009 than they have this year, an Ipsos survey has found. **REUTERS**

travel **23**

# Travel (and get paid to do it)

## TheTravelJunkie



et setting around the world (and getting paid for it), the life of a travel writer is a glamorous one. Trying to get into this coveted and competitive career isn't easy, prompting many to ask: How do I break into the biz? I regularly get e-mails from readers asking for advice. While I do my best to share what I know, it's nice to get a second opinion.

Meet David Farley, a New York-based writer who teaches travel writing at New York University. He has been widely published and is the author of the soon-to-be-released travel book, *An Irreverent Curiosity: In Search of the Church's Strangest Relic in Italy's Oddest Town*, available next spring.

David shares his expertise on how you can break into the travel writing biz:

**TAKE A TRAVEL WRITING COURSE** offered by schools in your area.

**READ BOOKS ABOUT THE WRITING CRAFT.** Travel Writing by Don George and published by Lonely Planet is a great place to start.

**READ ARTICLES WRITTEN BY CELEBRATED TRAVEL WRITERS.**

The best travel writing captures a sense of place. Tap into your five senses to bring the place alive, adding depth and vividness to your descriptions. Add quotes and historical/political context to situate the destination.

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**GO ONE STEP BEYOND** the realm of an average tourist. Like a reporter, you must talk to people, arrange interviews and get

relevant quotes.

**MOST TRAVEL EDITORS DON'T WANT TO READ PROPOSALS,** they want to see the finished article, already written and polished. Find out the e-mail address of a newspaper's travel editor and send it on. If that editor wants the piece, they'll buy it from you and you'll have your first big clip.

**PITCH YOUR WORK** to local papers, magazines, newsletters and travel websites. Try to get published anywhere and everywhere.

**TRAVEL WRITERS DON'T MAKE MUCH MONEY.** On assignment, it's nice hotels; at home, it's bare cupboards and ramen noodles. Few people can make a living solely from it. Either stick to your day job and write on the side, or become a full-time writer that focuses on travel, but also writes about other passions.

**DRIVE IS MOST IMPORTANT.** The most successful students I've taught weren't the most talented, but rather the most determined. Good luck and safe travels.

Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing on OLN, and editor of thetraveljunkie.ca.



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The Producers Guild of America has honoured the movie Milk with its Stanley Kramer Award for the film's portrayal of the first openly gay man elected to major public office in the U.S. The prize is handed out to movies that take on provocative social issues. [IMDB.COM](http://IMDB.COM)

# Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, [TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA](mailto:TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA)

## Ruffalo's brother dies after shooting

**CRIME** Actor Mark Ruffalo's brother has died a week after he was found at his Beverly Hills home with a gunshot wound to the head, police said yesterday.

Scott Ruffalo, 39, a hair stylist, was taken off life support Monday night, police said.

Ruffalo died hours after a woman wanted by police in connection with the shooting — 26-year-old Shaha Mishaal Adham — turned herself in and was charged with attempted murder.

Brian Scofield, 29, who police named as a "person of interest" in Ruffalo's death, turned himself over to authorities along with Adham, but he has since been released.

REUTERS

# Smith on the defensive

ROBERT ABELE  
for Metro Canada

**Will Smith's status as the world's biggest movie star — whether he's playing an earth defender (Independence Day), superhero (Hancock) or the last man standing (I Am Legend) — doesn't make it any easier for him to handle love scenes.**

In his newest film, Seven Pounds, Smith's character — a haunted man seeking redemption — finds solace one night in the arms of a cardiac patient played by Rosario Dawson.

No such solace existed for Smith on the set for those moments.

"Will is shockingly shy about intimacy with strangers," says Dawson,



Will Smith and Rosario Dawson star in Seven Pounds.

who says her gregarious, hard-working co-star pushed back the filming of their kissing scenes for weeks, "to the point where I started getting nervous about my breath."

And when it came to that day's filming, she no-

ticed Smith revving up for it by loudly proclaiming to himself, "Yeah, we're gonna get this scene! Whooo! Yeah, I'm ready to go today!"

"I was like, 'You're kind of freakin' me out, like I need a little calm to go in-

to this, some candles and nice music, and you're screaming like you're playing football or something,'" says Dawson, laughing at the memory, "But it was so sweet. Everybody could tell he was really nervous."

Smith, whose wife of many years is actress Jada Pinkett Smith, smiles good-naturedly in talking about his on-camera skittishness regarding sex.

He explains it by saying that he lives in fear that a woman cast opposite him in those moments will look at her famous, married scene partner as an opportunistic groper.

"I need women to be comfortable around me, and doing a love scene with our clothes off just puts me in a defensive

space," he said. "But it also hurts the acting if I'm in that space."

The idea, he said, is to get to a comfortable point "where a hand can brush up against her and it's not, 'Oh, excuse me.'"

At least his romantic interlude in Seven Pounds was a necessary one for the story's message of renewal in the face of debilitating trauma, which has come to mean everything for its relentlessly positive and upbeat star/producer.

"The spring is always coming," says Smith. "And this character didn't realize that. He didn't know that what got broken could be repaired. And I love that transformative power of love, how you've got to be prepared to catch the wave of new life."

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	617	522	32 SHOW	EastEnders		Saxondale	Kink in Hair	Kink in Hair	Durham County	Billable Hours	G-Spot	Starter Wife		
	601	562	33 SLICE	Real Housewives of OC		Filthy Rich: Cattle Drive (N)		ET Canada		Matchmaker	Real Housewives of OC		Trading Sp	
	-	633	34 ENC2	Moonstruck	Keep It in the Family		» » (1973, Comedy)		For Keeps		» » (1988, Drama) Molly Ringwald.		(10:40) Home Fries (1998)	
	520	505	35 DISC	Monster Moves		Mayday		Daily Planet		MythBusters		Cash Cab		
	620	523	36 BRAVO	Wingfield	Letters	Arts & Minds	The Achievers	Law & Order "Mega"		Without a Trace		Broken Hearts		
	294	650	40 WPCH	(6) Conspiracy Theory (1997, Suspense)		Seinfeld		Family Guy		Family Guy	(10:15) Conspiracy Theory (1997, Suspense)			
	626	547	41 COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Just for Laughs	Corner Gas		The Simpsons	South Park	House Party		
cable variety	-	539	42 TCM	(6) The Naked City (1948)		High Noon		» » » » (1952, Western)		The Bishop's Wife		» » (1947, Fantasy) Cary Grant.		
	628	584	43 SPIKE	UFC Fight for the Troops (HDTV) (Live)						UFC Fight for the Troops (HDTV)				
	522	516	45 HIST	Captain Cook: Obsession		NCIS "Switch"		Cities of the Underworld		Captain Cook: Obsession		NCIS		
	627	528	46 SPACE	Battlestar Galactica		Ghost Hunters International (N)		Stargate SG-1 "Tin Man"		Lost "I Do"		Deep Space 9		
	-	-	47 AMC	(6) Posse » » » (1993, Western)				The Comancheros » » » (1961, Western) John Wayne, Stuart Whitman.				Blown Away		
	619	525	49 TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Beverly Hills, 90210		Reality	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld		
	600	564	50 HGTV	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Million Dollar Listing		Holmes on Homes		Mansions		The Stagers	Property Virgin	
	501	391	52 CTV	CTV Newsnet		News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News		
	504	508	70 BNN	Squeeze Play		Market Call		Headline	Market Call	Commodities	Business News	Squeeze Play		
	526	507	92 VIVA	The West Wing		Mediums	Psychic Detect	Mediums	Encounters	Judging Amy		Commander		
269	350	93 APTN	APTN National News: Contact		Copper Thunderbird		Canadian Geographic		Tribal Treks		Guides	Wings-Canada		
-	-	94 MCP	(6:30) News	News	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Hola Que Tal			
571	581	100 MMM	Revival	Where You At	Fabulous Life Of... Homes.		Party of Five		Fabulous Life Of... Homes.		Party of Five			
570	580	101 MM	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Degrassi: Next		Degrassi: Next		PunchMuch		disBand			
581	566	102 MTV	Super Sweet	The Hills	Dance Life	Dance Life	MTV Live	After	A Double Shot of Love		Dance Life			

## critics' corner—

Once a cop, always a cop. And that mind-set might come in handy this week. A BAU case hits close to home for Morgan (Shemar Moore), who was a police officer before joining the team, when a serial killer specifically focuses on members of the police force in Phoenix, Ariz., in "Brothers in Arms."

10 PM on KREM CFCN



## Little Spirit: Christmas in New York

Tired of the same old animated holiday specials? Here's something new, and it's got Danny DeVito — no, he's not Scrooge. He voices a New York cabby who tells the tale of a young newcomer to the Big Apple who gets separated from his dog. He goes looking for her accompanied by a magical imp, Little Spirit, who introduces him to all the interesting people and cultures New York at holiday time has to offer. Lucy Liu and Brian Williams also lend their voices. 9 PM on CKAL





**Holloway is going to be a dad**  
Lost star Josh Holloway is going to be a daddy. The actor and his wife, Jessica, are expecting their first child, due next year. **PEOPLE.COM**

## Celebrity Buzz

# Friends rely on Smith for advice

**MARRIAGE** Actor Will Smith is under pressure from his famous friends to make his marriage to wife Jada Pinkett Smith work because they're constantly coming to him for relationship advice, **imdb.com** reports.

The tight-knit couple are preparing to celebrate their 11th year of married life on Dec. 31. But Smith's famous pals have "terrified" him by marking their union as the golden standard in Hollywood.

"I was with (rapper) Redman the other day (and) he said, 'Man, listen. I've got this relationship that I'm trying to make work, but I'm telling you, if you and Jada don't work, I'm done,'" Smith tells **People.com**. "That so terrifies me that there are people's lives that I can affect like that just with little stuff, not even having to do anything big. So I don't want to break that ... I might mess something up, and that sorta keeps me in a

place where I'm really focused and paying attention, and I just don't want to step wrongly."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



## Lohan to write of split

**PEOPLE** Lindsay Lohan is begging the paparazzi to stop asking her if she's split from girlfriend Samantha Ronson, assuring fans she'd write the news on her blog if they ever broke up, **imdb.com** reports.

Rumours have swirled about the couple's relationship status since they began dating earlier this year.

They have repeatedly denied splitting, and Lohan has once

again taken to her MySpace.com blog to "prove all the liars wrong" — less than a week after slamming previous break-up reports.

"(The paparazzi) should just stop asking altogether, once and for all if she and I are broken up because frankly, if we ever, ever did ... I would say it before they could even think of asking ... I'd say it here probably," Lohan wrote.

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## Anderson outfit shocks crowd

**PEOPLE** Pamela Anderson stunned onlookers when she arrived at a prestigious art fair wearing just a T-shirt and underwear, **femalefirst.co.uk** reports.

The actress seemed unaware of the controversy she was causing at the Art Basel Miami Beach fair, and later posed for photographs bending over paintings with her butt in the air.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



# Smith defends Grey's bosses

**CAREER** Actress Brooke Smith has defended her former TV bosses at Grey's Anatomy, insisting she has "no hard feelings" after her lesbian character was written out of the show, **imdb.com** reports.

Network bosses announced Smith would be axed from the show last month, sparking rumours she was written out of the series in a bid to end her character Dr. Erica Hahn's burgeoning homosexual affair.

Grey's creator Shonda Rhimes refuted the reports, telling **Us Weekly**, "Brooke Smith was obviously not fired for playing a lesbian. Clearly it's not an issue as we have a lesbian character on the show — Calliope Torres (Sara Ramirez). Unfortunately, we did not

find that the magic and chemistry with Brooke's character would sustain in the long run."

Actor Isaiah Washington, who was let go from the show last year, lashed out at his former bosses, calling their decision to cut Smith "disgusting."

But Smith has defended Rhimes, adding, "It's an end of a chapter. It was a good experience. I'd played gay characters before, and I don't think that's going to end. There's no hard feelings. I have other projects now, so it is what it is."

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# I weigh 200: Winfrey

**HEALTH** In the January's **O** magazine, Oprah Winfrey confesses that she now weighs 200 pounds and has "fallen off the wagon," **usmagazine.com** reports.

"I'm mad at myself," writes Winfrey. "I'm embarrassed. I can't believe that after all these years, all the things I know how to do, I'm still talking about my weight. I look at my thinner self and think, 'How did I let this hap-

pen again?'"

In the article, Winfrey says she has struggled with an out-of-balance thyroid and the condition made her develop "a fear of working out."

She confessed that she's packed on 40 pounds since she weighed 160 pounds in 2006. "Yes, you're adding correctly; that means the dreaded 2-0-0," Winfrey says.

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## Twain's dating sparks rumours

**RELATIONSHIPS** Singer Shania Twain has sparked reports she's dating the husband of the woman her ex is alleged to have had an affair with after the mystery man was spotted escorting Twain around New York recently, **femalefirst.co.uk** reports.

Twain split from her husband Robert (Mutt) Lang in May, following his revelation that

he was romancing the couple's longtime secretary Marie-Anne Thiebaud, who was the manager of their Swiss estate.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



## Jolie spends less on Pitt

**PEOPLE** It appears even stars are affected by the recession.

In Touch has learned that Angelina Jolie's 45th birthday present to Brad Pitt will be another motorcycle. But this year's base price on the new Ducati is \$12,000 US — much less compared to last year's gift that cost a reported \$100,000.

Still, Jolie knows what Pitt likes, intouch-weekly.com reports.

"Since Angie is always in a dilemma of what to buy Brad, she's getting him the new Ducati Monster 1100S titanium," an insider tells In Touch.

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